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17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

The growth and success of an original composition project designed to encourage creative work in music is described. The major purpose beyond the composition of songs or instrumental works, was the improvement and growth of the student socially, intellectually, and culturally as well as musically.

More than 2,000 students participated by applying their imagination, originality, and musical knowledge. The program began in the first grade and extended to the secondary school level. With the exception of a very few gifted students, a formal theory class was of little value and seemed to stifle creative thinking. Most composition was done with little teaching procedure except in the areas of motivation and guidance. The original music, which was composed both individually and as a class effort, included holiday songs, small ensemble works, instrumental pieces, songs, and piano solos. Based on the assumption that musical notation is meaningless without sound, the schools arranged for all student compositions to be performed for an audience. As a result of highly favorable reactions of teachers, parents, and students as shown on evaluation surveys, the original composition project will be enlarged, enriched, and continued in the Polk County school system.

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TD

CREATIVE MUSIC EDUCATION

original composition

by

STUDENTS

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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POLK COUNTY IOWA

SCHOOLS

1960--1961

Polk County Board of Education

216 S. W. FIRST

Des Moines 9, Iowa

August 21, 1961

To Friends of Education
Polk County, Iowa

The art of teaching has always been a complicated and challenging occupation. Today as never before the demands on the teacher to meet the educational needs of all the students has reached even greater proportions.

One of the most important objectives for all teachers is that of providing situations which will encourage original and creative thinking.

The teachers of Polk County are to be commended for the unusual experiences they are providing their students in the art of creating original music compositions. This is not easy to do. It requires much more than just teaching from the book. As County Superintendent of Schools I hope you continue to place considerable emphasis on this project.

Sincerely yours,

Ralph C. Norris

Ralph C. Norris
County Superintendent of Schools

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ORIGINAL COMPOSITION PROJECT COMMITTEE

1960--1961

Chairman of the Project . . . Bernadine Mathes, Elementary Music
Clover Hills Elementary School
West Des Moines, Iowa

Advisor . . . . . Dr. Francis J. Pyle
Department of Theory
College of Fine Arts
Drake University

Advisor . . . . . Professor Marion Marr Knudsen
Department of Music Education
College of Fine Arts
Drake University

Consultant . . . . . Janice S. Smith, Director
Department of Music Education
Polk County Schools

President of Polk County Music Educators' Association
Richard Baber, Vocal Instructor
Bondurant-Farrar Community School
Bondurant, Iowa

Art Illustrations . . . . . Newt Schreiber
Evanston, Illinois

This report was reproduced in the Administrative Office of the

Polk County Board of Education

Mr. Ralph C. Norris, Superintendent

216 Southwest First Street
Des Moines 9, Iowa

CREATIVE MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE POLK COUNTY SCHOOLS

ORIGINAL COMPOSITION PROJECT

The students in the Polk County (Iowa) schools have completed the second year of participation in a project of writing original composition designed to encourage creative work in music.

More than 2,000 students have applied their imagination, originality and musical knowledge to the project this year. We feel that these students should be encouraged to continue and improve in their ability to write music, and that this should be a continuing project through both the elementary and secondary schools.

These pages have been compiled in an effort to show the growth of the project and how it was carried out this year. The bulletin will also include our planning for the future, for this is something which the students also feel should be continued and explored more fully.

We feel that all who participated in the project should be congratulated for its success and hope that they will be encouraged to explore new areas and ideas.

Bernadine Mathes, Chairman
Original Composition Project

****

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

THE IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH OF THE STUDENT

Socially through making contributions to the composition of small musical pieces in the classroom.

Musically through notating, performing and, where possible, scoring and harmonizing of class or individually created musical ideas.

Intellectually through learning to be alert to discriminate between literate and illiterate musical sounds, and to discriminate between the less and more satisfactory musical patterns.

Culturally through active participation as a student creator to develop an intensified understanding of our musical heritage and the creative process which has brought this heritage into being.

TEACHING TECHNIQUES FOR CREATIVE MUSIC EDUCATION

October 15, 1960

Bernadine Mathes, Chairman
Clover Hills, West Des Moines

We have found that, with the exception of a few very gifted students, boys and girls should not be encumbered with rules and taboos in the beginning. The approach of a formal theory class seems to stifle creative thinking for the young student. Turn them loose and they will surprise you with the original work they will produce. Their previous musical experience will be reflected here and they know what they like to hear. These students don't know that writing music is hard work unless we give them that idea.

Our teaching procedure should probably follow at least two steps. First, should be motivation and secondly, guidance. The children first should have had some classroom experience in a group project of creative writing. Opportunity for this may come at unexpected moments. Sometimes a child may say, if a song has ended on a third or fifth of the chord, "I think the song should end like this," and will proceed to sing his own ending. This is the time to write this new idea on the chalkboard for everyone to see. If we have a new ending why not write a new beginning. From here they may wish to take a new poem and write a melody for it. From here they may wish to take a new poem and write a melody for it.

As the students progress into the upper elementary grades, group work becomes a little more difficult and students are reluctant to sing a phrase alone. But if you are writing the music on the chalkboard, they will tell you whether the next notes should go up or down, skip a third, etc. If you then sing it back to them they are quick to accept or make changes and are quite critical of their own work. By this time they have had so much experience in listening and singing and some talking about form, that these songs come out in phrases and various form without formal planning.

Here is where they are ready to take off on their own. Give them a stack of music paper and turn them loose. They may come back to you and say, "This is the way I want it to sound but I can't seem to write it down." Of course this is going to take time on your part and we're all busy, but it can be a rewarding experience for us and a proud and exciting one for the child.

Holidays are another source of inspiration--and what fires a child's enthusiasm and imagination more than Halloween? Perhaps they will begin with only sound effects, but can proceed to writing short poems and then a melody which will very likely be in a minor mode. Primary grades can dramatize ideas also, such as going out on Trick for Treat Night. Their trick could be a song they have made up. You know it is refreshing to hear a really original trick from those "Beggars."

From Halloween we proceed to Thanksgiving and a different type of music. Here you have an opportunity for more traditional and even sacred themes, and children do like music of this nature also.

Bells lend a lovely atmosphere to any Christmas music. Give a child a set of bells to work with alone and very likely he will come up with a melody. Older children could work out a bell introduction or even a bell descant for a traditional carol. There are all sorts of possibilities but we must be receptive to suggestions and ideas from our students. Once we get them started and motivated, we will find that their enthusiasm will carry us beyond anything we may have planned.

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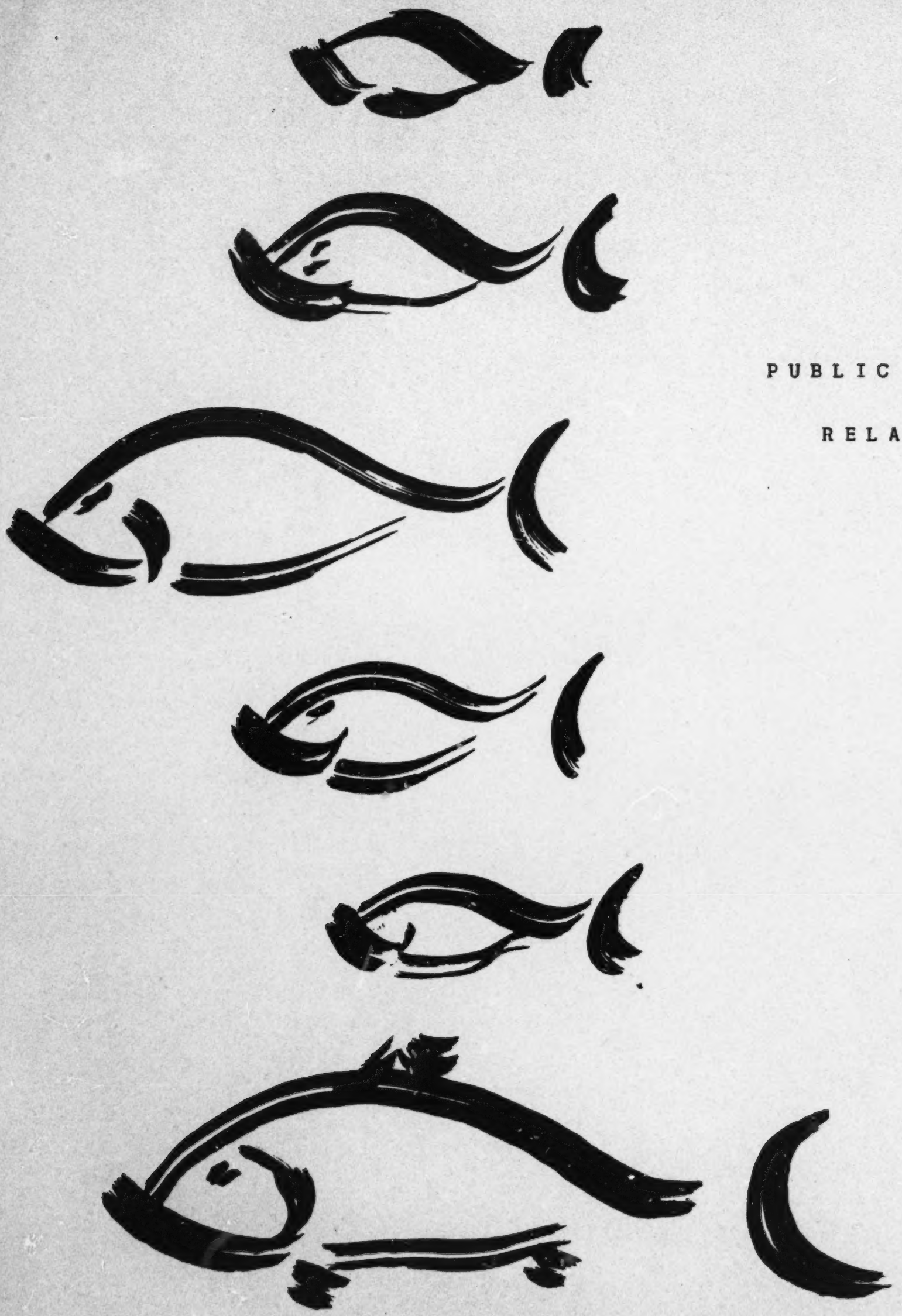

PUBLIC

RELATIONS

PUBLIC RELATIONS

MAGAZINE ARTICIES 1959—60

Music Educators Journal — Official Magazine of Music Educators National Conf.
National Education Association

Elementary Composition Project

STUDENTS in the Polk County (Iowa) schools have been having a "field day" writing their own music. With the help of their teachers and the guidance of Francis J. Pyle, professor of theory at Drake University in Des Moines, many children have had their first taste of writing music.

The project was in the making for about two years, before we swung into production. A series of meetings and discussions helped the teachers in planning the project which culminated in a performance at the Clive Rural Independent School on April 25, 1960.

The Clover Hills Elementary School in West Des Moines has had so many students writing their own compositions that they arranged to have a workshop with Dr. Pyle. The Parkview Elementary School in Ankeny used the student compositions for their spring music program. Other schools participating in the creative music education project include Clive, Clegg Park Elementary in West Des Moines, Sheldahl Elementary and Elkhart Elementary in North Polk Community School, Norwoodville Elementary and Saylor Center Elementary in Saydel Consolidated School; and the Johnston Elementary School.

Approximately 1,000 students were "exposed" to this approach to music (primarily in the elementary schools). If these students are encouraged to continue and to improve in their ability to write music, the secondary schools should also provide opportunities for student growth along these lines. There should be some time spent on composing, arranging, and conducting in connection with performance in the specialized areas of vocal and instrumental music in the junior and senior high schools. We sincerely hope that the teachers and students will consider this only a beginning in creative music education and that the results obtained from this project will encourage all to continue to develop this idea further.

A complete explanation of the planning and evaluation of this successful project is available from the Polk County Superintendent of Schools' Office, 216 S.W. First, Des Moines, Iowa.

—JANICE S. SMITH, *director, Department of Music Education, Polk County Board of Education, Des Moines, Iowa.*

November-December, Nineteen Sixty

Rural Education News -- Official Magazine of the Department of Rural Education
National Education Association

Iowa Composers Perform

The students in the Polk County, Iowa schools have been having a "field day" writing their own music. With the help of their teachers and the guidance of Dr. Francis J. Pyle, Professor of Theory at Drake University in Des Moines, many children have had their first taste of writing music that really "belongs to them."

The project has been in the making for about two years. A series of meetings and discussions helped the teachers in planning the project which culminated in a performance at the Clive Rural Independent School on April 25, 1960.

The Clover Hills Elementary School in West Des Moines has had so many students writing their own compositions that they arranged to have a workshop with Dr. Pyle in their own building. The Parkview Elementary School in Ankeny used the student compositions for their spring music program. Other schools participating in the creative music education project include Clive, Clegg Park Elementary in West Des Moines, Sheldahl Elementary and Elkhart Elementary in North Polk Community School, Norwoodville Elementary and Saylor Center Elementary in Saydel Consolidated School and the Johnston Elementary School.

A complete explanation of the planning and evaluation of the project is available from the Polk County Superintendent of Schools' Office, 216 S.W. First, Des Moines, Iowa.

Examples of student compositions and other materials will be included in the project report. Janice S. Smith, Director, Department of Music Education for Polk County is coordinator for the project.

PERFORMANCE

Musical notation is meaningless without sound. An original idea must be performed and heard to be appreciated. Therefore, we felt it very important that all original compositions be performed for an audience. We urged each school to arrange to have some kind of hearing for all compositions written by the students in their own school.

In addition to the programs in individual schools, representative creative work from each school was performed by the students at Clover Hills Elementary School in West Des Moines. Forty-Six numbers were heard, some very brief, others more lengthy, representing students in 1st through 8th grades and including songs, both individual and class projects, small groups, vocal and instrumental, instrumental solos and piano solos.

Clover Hills
Elementary School
May 8, 1961 7:00 P. M.

ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS BY STUDENTS

IN THE POLK COUNTY SCHOOLS

Dr. Francis J. Pyle, Advisor
Bernadine Mathes, Chairman-
Hostess

GROUP		TITLE	STUDENT COMPOSER	SCHOOL	GRADE	MUSIC TEACHER	CLASSROOM TEACHER
I	1.	Clover Hills Cheer Song	Rick Jackson Dana Jackson	Clover Hills	5 & 7	Bernadine Mathes	
Special Days	2.	See the American Flag	Class	Clover Hills	1	Ellen Jackson	Mrs. Steinbrenner
	3.	David's Jack-O'Lantern	Class	Clover Hills	2	Ellen Jackson	Mrs. Peterson
	4.	Brotherhood	Joel Rosenthal	Clover Hills	2	Ellen Jackson	Mrs. Bohstedt
	5.	Brotherhood Week	Ann Wegner Mrs. Wegner	Clover Hills	2	Ellen Jackson	Mrs. Bohstedt
	6.	The North Wind Blows	Susan Meyer	Clover Hills	3	Ellen Jackson	Mrs. Rinker
	7.	Happy Thanksgiving	Class	Saydel (Saylor Center)	2	Bill Van Note	Miss Wylie
	8.	Thanksgiving Day	Class	Saydel (Saylor Center)	2	Bill Van Note	Mrs. Butler
	9.	Christmas Night	Class	Saydel (Norwoodville)	3	Bill Van Note	Mrs. McClure
	10.	Jingle Jangle	Class	Saydel (Norwoodville)	3	Bill Van Note	Mrs. Comito

ORIGINAL COMPOSITION PROGRAM (continued)

II Small Ensembles	11.	Christmas Lullaby (Vocal)	John Santi	North Polk (Sheldahl)	6	Edna Hughes	Mrs. Dykes
	12.	In Winter (Instr.)	Bonnie Feil Jen Watts	Fair Meadows	5	Anna Deaton	Edith Mitchell
	13.	He Prayeth Well (Instr. and Vocal)	Paula Underwood Billie Pierce Sue Larsen Debbie Larsen Virginia Wehrle	Clover Hills	6	Bernadine Mathes	Mrs. Beaty
	14.	Mother Nature House-cleans (Instr.)	Key Beth Gfeller	North Polk (Sheldahl)	6	Edna Hughes John Carlsten	Mrs. Dykes
III Instrumental Solos	15.	Puppet March (Xylophone)	Carolyn Layden	Phenix	4	Margaret Woods	Rose Hanzlik
	16.	Indian Rain Chant (Flute)	Debbie Sander	Phenix	5	Margaret Woods Jerry Kinney	Marian Schneider
	17.	Clarinet Solo	Diane Durham	Ankeny	5	Rita Benson George Friedmeyer	Ruth Bond
	18.	Grand March (Trumpet)	Brian Steen	Phenix	5	Margaret Woods Jerry Kinney	Helen Doris Wright
IV Songs	19.	Look At The Snow	Jim Edwards	Fair Meadows	4	Anna Deaton	Marvel Riehm
	20.	School Days	David Timm	Fair Meadows	5	Anna Deaton	Lucile Schertz
	21.	In An Old Attic	Karen Soliday	Clover Hills	4	Bernadine Mathes	Genevieve Brown
	22.	We Thank Thee Father	Charles Brendeland	North Polk (Sheldahl)	4	Edna Hughes Loraine Brendeland	
	23.	New Friends and Old Friends	Mary Ellen Vande Lune Margaret Smith Janet Berchenbriter	Clover Hills	6	Bernadine Mathes Louise Haslup	Mrs. Beaty
V Piano Solo	24.	Sunrise and Sunset	John Comer	Saydel (Norwoodville)	5	Bill Van Note	Mr. Nordaker Mrs. Jacobsen
	25.	The Storm	Tina Jesperson	Clegg Park	4	Shirley Ruppert Mrs. Wistey	Mrs. Whitaker
	26.	Indian Summer	Bernie Mathes	Clover Hills	5	Bernadine Mathes	Mrs. Brakke

VI Class Projects	27.	When You Talk To a Monkey	Class	Urbandale	2	Birdice King	Polly Clark
	28.	March	Class	Clegg Park	3	Shirley Ruppert	Mabel Root
	29.	Pickin' Cotton All Day	Class	Clover Hills	3	Ellen Jackson	Mrs. Christiansen
VII Songs	30.	Signs of Spring	Sandra Deaton	Clegg Park	3	Shirley Ruppert Anna Deaton	Mabel Root
	31.	Some One	Jennifer Mathes	Clover Hills	3	Ellen Jackson	Mrs. Rinker
	32.	Spring	Karen Thorbrogger	Fair Meadows	6	Anna Deaton	Lola Porter
	33.	The Easter Bunny Is On His Way	Mark Carraher	Ankeny	2	Rita Benson	Mrs. Crosser
	34.	The Easter Bunny Hop	Debbie Jacobson	Ankeny	4	Rita Benson	Mrs. Swenson
	35.	Spring Is Coming	Pamela Brown	Clover Hills	5	Bernadine Mathes Mrs. Tyner	Miss Metier
	36.	Joys In Spring	Mary Jo Gladow	Fair Meadows	3	Anna Deaton	Mrs. Clark
	37.	Swinging	Class Roberta Smith	Fair Meadows	4	Anna Deaton	Mary Graeber
VIII Piano Solos	38.	Waltz	Class Bonnie Stubbe	Ankeny	4	Rita Benson Mrs. Peterson	Mrs. Baker
	39.	Singing Wheels	Carol Eckey	Clegg Park	5	Shirley Ruppert Mrs. D'Apra	Mrs. Lemke
	40.	Piano Solo	Marlys Sherer	Urbandale	8	Alan Peters	
	41.	Piano Solo	Christine Ver Ploeg	Clover Hills	6	Bernadine Mathes	Mrs. Beaty
IX Class Projects	42.	The Disappointed Groundhog	Class	Clegg Park	4	Shirley Ruppert	Mrs. Whitaker
	43.	Spring Days	Class	Clegg Park	5	Shirley Ruppert	Mrs. Lemke
	44.	Nine Little Planets	Class	Clover Hills	4	Bernadine Mathes	Mrs. Brown
	45.	Beautiful Iowa	Class	Clover Hills	5	Bernadine Mathes	Mrs. Metier
	46.	The Flag Is Passing By	Class Virginia Wehrle	Clover Hills	6	Bernadine Mathes	Mrs. Beaty

Note: Twelve compositions from the above numbers were selected by the committee to appear on KDPS--TV.

KDPS--TV Channel 11
The Voice of Education in Polk County

"KNOW YOUR SCHOOL SERIES"
Creative Music Education
May 24, 1961 8:30 PM

INTRODUCTIONS AND EXPLANATION OF THE PROJECT -

STUDENT COMPOSITIONS

	Title of Composition	Timing	Student Composer	School	Music Teacher	Grade	Group Performing
1.	Someone	55 sec.	Jennifer Mathes	Clover Hills West D.M.	Ellen Jackson	3	Vocal with Rhythm Instr. and Piano
2.	Puppet March	23 sec.	Carolyn Layden	Phenix West D.M.	Margaret Woods	4	Orch./Bells/Piano
3.	When You Talk To a Monkey	45 sec.	Class	Urbandale	Birdice King Polly Clarke	2	Vocal with Piano
4.	Christmas Lullaby	60 sec.	John Santi	Sheldahl (N. Polk)	Edna Hughes John Carleston	6	Clarinet and Voice
5.	Happy Thanksgiving	15 sec.	Class	Saylor Center (Saydel)	Bill Van Note Catherine Wylie	2	Vocal with Autoharp
6.	Jingle Jangle	30 sec.	Class	Norwoodville (Saydel)	Bill Van Note Dorothy Comito	3	Vocal with Autoharp

DISCUSSION OF EDUCATIONAL VALUES -

7.	He Prayeth Well	60 sec.	Paula Underwood Virginia Wehrle Bille Pierce/Sue and Debbie Larson	Clover Hills (West D.M.)	Bernadine Mathes	6	Vocal with Saxophone and Piano
8.	Indian Rain Chant	38 sec.	Debbie Sander	Phenix (West D.M.)	Margaret Woods Jerry Kinney	5	Flute and Tom Tom
9.	Easter Bunny Hop	30 sec.	Debbie Jacobsen	Ankeny	Rita Benson	4	Vocal Solo/Piano
10.	Singing Wheels	24 sec.	Carol Eckey	Clegg Park (West D.M.)	Shirley Ruppert Evelyn D'Arpa	5	Piano Solo
11.	School Days	40 sec.	David Timm	Fairmeadows	Anna Deaton	5	Vocal with Piano
12.	Pickin' Cotton	60 sec.	Class	Clover Hills (West D.M.)	Ellen Jackson	3	Vocal Group with Dramatization

EXCERPTS FROM

DISCUSSION OF EDUCATION VALUES

KDPS--Telecast

Dr. Francis J. Pyle:

The Polk County Creative Music Project is important to me for several reasons. First, it is a large scale demonstration that young boys and girls can write music that is literate. Second, and more important, this project is one that tends to call attention to MUSIC rather than mere performance.

The audience, the performer, and the composer have formed a three part base upon which music has always rested. Public attention and even public music education has often been centered upon such subsidiary matters as the size of the audience and the personality and the technique of the performer. Important as these matters are, the truth still remains that there can be neither audience nor performer unless there is MUSIC. And MUSIC must be supplied by the composer. This Polk County Project tends to make the student aware of this indispensable man, the composer, how he works and what he does.

Professor Marion Marr Knudsen:

One of the obligations of teachers is to orientate the parents and the public to the educational values which grow out of a project of this kind. This has also been a way for teachers to find out what the child <u>knows</u> and what he doesn't know--and to find ways of constantly evaluating the child's musical progress. In fact, this week in the county schools, the students are evaluating themselves with a check sheet. This will be concrete evidence of what they have learned.

Dr. Francis J. Pyle:

It is unusual that these boys and girls have made their technical discoveries so early. For many adults composition is some worthless kind of black magic. In reality music composition is a complex craft which must be learned; and these young boys and girls are themselves having fun discovering how the mature composer writes his music, and what the finished product must be able to do for the performer, the audience and himself.

Professor Marion Marr Knudsen:

This has also been a challenge to those of us in the teacher training program. It becomes more apparent that we need to help teachers become aware of the importance of understanding characteristics of child growth, to help them bring to the classroom a background of musical knowledge and to provide an environment in which a child is free to experiment, explore, create and develop.

****

A Kinescope (Sound Film) has been made from the Video-Tape of the Telecast. This is approximately 30 minutes in length and in black and white.

This film is available for check-out by any teacher in the county and may also be used for in-service meetings in individual schools. For further information contact the Audio-Visual Library of the Polk County Supt. of Schools Office, 216 Southwest First, Des Moines 9, Iowa.

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Des Moines Sunday Register
May 7, 1961
Local Section

Polk Pupils Composing Real Music

By Julie Zelenka

A sixth-grade girl from Sheldahl elementary school in the North Polk School District has composed an instrumental number for flute, oboe and piano.

A fifth-grade class at Clover Hills Elementary School in West Des Moines has collaborated on the composition of a song called "Beautiful Iowa."

Both the girl and the group are participating in an "original composition" program designed to encourage creative work in music in Polk county elementary schools outside Des Moines.

More than 2,000 students have applied their thoughts and their pencils to the project this year.

Mrs. Janice Smith, director of music education for the Polk County School board is supervising the program. Advisers for the project are Dr. Francis J. Pyle, professor of theory at Drake University, and Miss Marion Marr, associate professor of music education at Drake.

Play Girl's Own Composition

Ann (left), 15, and Kay Beth, 11, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Gfeller of near Alleman, rehearse Kay Beth's original composition for flute, oboe and piano which they'll play, with their father at the piano, Monday night at Clover Hills elementary school in West Des Moines. Kay Beth is one of more than 2,000 Polk county elementary pupils who are composing music.

Beautiful Iowa
Clover Hills Elementary School, West Des Moines, Iowa — Fifth Grade Class, Miss Matier
Mrs. Bernadine Mathes, Music Teacher
I—o—wa, I—o—wa, how atur—dy you de stard,
Fine
In in—dus—try and his—to—ry, you're the state for me.

Creativity Encouraged

Mrs. Smith said, "This gives a child the opportunity to express his own personality through music. We ask the children to put what they think and feel into the music.

"It encourages creativity which carries over into other work. They put words to music and music to words. Some classes have prepared music and narrative presentation of social studies.

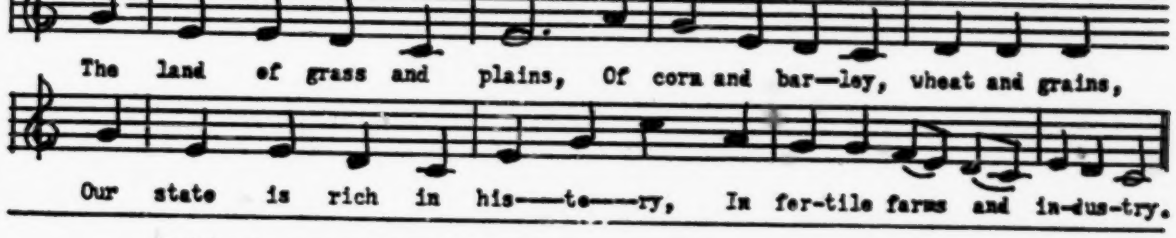
"This is a more individualized approach to teaching music and a more intellectual approach. When a child is asked to express his ideas through music he realizes the importance of learning to read music. He knows he must have some sign to represent what he sings or plays, or by tomorrow he will have forgotten the melody he wanted to write," Mrs. Smith said.

Not Only Melody

Mrs. Smith said the sixth-grade girl from Sheldahl, Kay Beth Gfeller, 11, is an example of the type of child who benefits most from creative projects of this type.

The girl's mother, Mrs. Norman Gfeller, said Kay Beth wrote her first song last year, the first year the project was tried in Polk county.

Mrs. Gfeller said Kay Beth has written numerous songs since. She doesn't limit her


The land of grass and plains, Of corn and bar—ley, wheat and grains,
Our state is rich in his——te——ry, In fer-tile farms and in-dus-try.

Original composition by a fifth grade Class at Clover Hills School

compositions to the melody, but adds bass parts and parts for other instruments. Her number for flute, oboe and piano was a natural development because Kay Beth plays oboe, her sister Ann, 15, plays flute and her father plays piano. The family lives on a farm southwest of Alleman.

West Des Moines

The three Gfellers will perform Kay Beth's composition at a program at 7 p. m. Monday at Clover Hills Elementary School. Young composers from five school districts — West Des Moines, North Polk, Saydel, Ankeny, and Urbandale—will present their works at the program.

Mrs. Smith said other original compositions have been presented at annual music festivals at many Polk county schools.

She said the West Des Moines school district has received the project more enthusiastically than any in the county. Every elementary school in that district has had students working on original composition.

Mrs. Smith said she feels "Beautiful Iowa," composed by Mrs. Bernadine Mathes's fifth-grade class at Clover Hills School, is "better than any of the other songs we have on Iowa."

She said, "It has a sturdiness of sound and atmosphere — a solid sound like the people of Iowa."

Then 50, Now 170

Mrs. Smith said that when a county-wide "original compositions" program was prepared last year, music teachers sent her 50 compositions to consider. This year she received 170.

"I just hate to have to pick the ones to be performed," she said. "Performing isn't really the purpose of this project. There are too many things you can't tell from looking at the music.

"The expression a person puts into performance of his own composition is essential, too. It is then that a child is expressing his own personality," she said.

TEACHER EVALUATION

SUMMATION OF CREATIVE COMPOSITION PROJECT 1960-1961

NAME _____ SCHOOL _____

1. What caused you to become interested in taking part in the Original Composition Project?

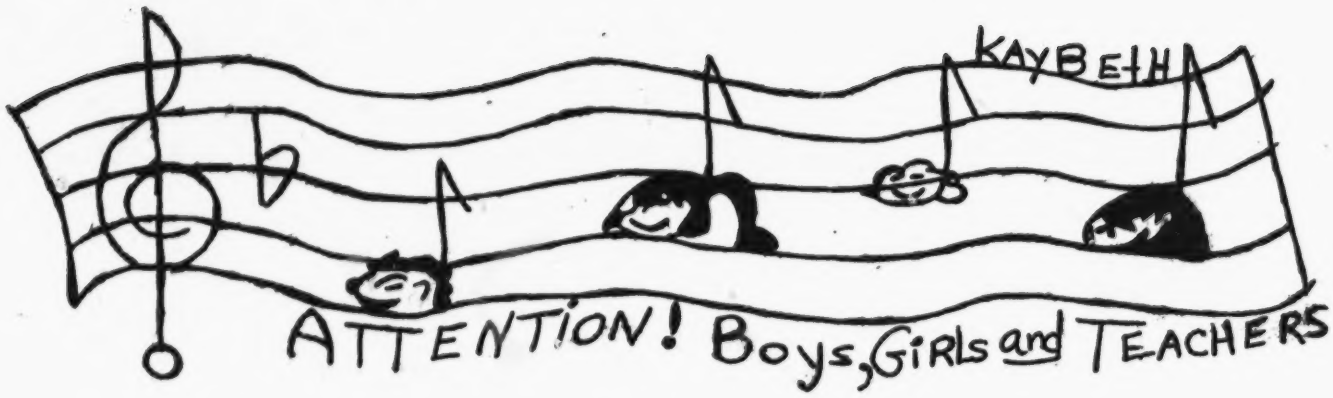
2. How did you interest the children in taking part in the project?

3. Describe the type of creative activities that were used in developing this interest?

4. What do you feel are the most valuable results of this type of instruction? (Consider the results in terms of child growth; i.e., socially, musically, intellectually, culturally. Please give examples of what happened and indicate the grade level of the child or children.)

5. What are your opinions of this year's project?

6. What are your suggestions for improvement?



May 15, 1961

DEAR STUDENT COMPOSERS:

We wish to compliment you on your excellent contributions to the original composition project. We want you to know how much all of us appreciate the thought, time and energy that went into the preparation of your composition.

We hope you have learned a great deal during the time you have been working on your musical selection and we will appreciate it very much if you will fill out the student evaluation sheet. The information you write on the evaluation sheet will be used in helping us to publish a bulletin and to plan for more and better creative projects in the future.

Remember to thank your teachers and anyone else who helped you attain this high goal.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR FINE ACHIEVEMENT!

Sincerely,

Frame A Pyle

Marion E Marr

Bernadine Mathes

Janice S. Smith

Committee and Advisors
Original Composition Project

Reproduced in the office of the Polk County Superintendent of Schools
216 S.W. First
Des Moines, Iowa

May 1961

STUDENT EVALUATION

Original Composition
Creative Music Activities
Polk County Schools

Name of Student _____ School _____

Name of Classroom Teacher _____ Grade _____

Name of School Music Teacher _____

Name of Music Teacher (Private piano, band director, etc.) _____

1. Did you learn more about musical notation? Yes ____ No ____

   What are some of the things you learned? _____

   _____

2. Did you learn how to read music in your music books at school better because of your interest in composing? Yes ____ No ____

3. Did you learn more about words and poetry? Yes ____ No ____

   What are some of the things you learned? _____

   _____

4. Did you learn more about singing? Yes ____ No ____

5. Did you learn more about playing an instrument? Yes ____ No ____

6. Did you learn more about appreciation of composers and their work? Yes ____ No ____

7. Did you learn to appreciate the work of your own classmates and friends? Yes ___ No ___

8. Did you learn something about how to work better with other people? Yes ____ No ____

9. Did you learn how to concentrate better? Yes ____ No ____

10. Did you use your imagination? Yes ____ No ____

11. Did the music you hear on radio and television help you to compose? Yes ____ No ____

12. Did the music you use in school help you to compose? Yes ____ No ____

13. Did you learn about history? Yes ____ No ____

14. Did you learn how to listen better to music? Yes ____ No ____

15. Did it help you to tell the difference between "good" and "poor" music? Yes ____ No ___

16. Was it fun? Yes ____ No ____

17. Was it work? Yes ____ No ____

18. Would you like to learn how to write more and better music? Yes ____ No ____

19. Who could help you to do this? _____

20. Write your remarks, comments or additional suggestions in the space below.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

FINDINGS OF STUDENT EVALUATION

	Grades 1-3		Grades 4-6		Grades 7-8	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Did you learn more about music notation?	20	0	108	10	11	4
2. Did you learn how to read music in your music books at school better because of your interest in composing?	18	3	83	32	3	12
3. Did you learn more about words and poetry?	21	1	84	29	3	11
4. Did you learn more about singing?	21	1	92	26	13	2
5. Did you learn more about playing an instrument?	6	9	41	77	4	11
6. Did you learn more about appreciation of composers and their work?	16	4	106	11	13	2
7. Did you learn to appreciate the work of your own classmates and friends?	21	0	116	1	13	2
8. Did you learn something about how to work better with other people?	21	1	96	21	12	3
9. Did you learn how to concentrate better?	15	2	102	16	8	7
10. Did you use your imagination?	21	1	111	7	12	3
11. Did the music you hear on radio and television help you to compose?	5	11	22	96	9	6
12. Did the music you use in school help you to compose?	18	4	69	47	11	4
13. Did you learn about history?	7	9	48	69	12	3
14. Did you learn how to listen better to music?	22	0	109	10	13	1
15. Did it help you to tell the difference between "good" and "poor" music?	19	0	115	3	11	4
16. Was it fun?	22	0	117	1	13	2
17. Was it work?	13	12	77	42	11	4
18. Would you like to learn how to write more and better music?	21	1	116	2	9	5

REPRESENTATIVE STATEMENTS FROM STUDENT EVALUATIONS

	GRADES 1 - 3	GRADES 4 - 6	GRADES 7 - 8
LEARNINGS IN MUSIC NOTATION	"How to set a song down when you have an idea in your head." "Music has a certain pattern." "Songs walk, run, gallop and skip. This is shown by the time signature."	"That you cannot just slap a bunch of notes down on a piece of paper and call it a song." "I learned how to write several instrument parts on one page." "To arrange music for different keyed horns." "Notes that sound good together--chords and triads."	"How to place chords to harmonize with a tune." "How to figure out chords and scales." "More about theory and composers of earlier times." "Transposing" "I think more theory would aid in future work."
LEARNINGS IN WORDS AND POETRY	"Plan the rhythm and words." "Words have to 'fit' the music." "Words have rhyme and rhythm patterns." "We noticed who wrote the words and music more."	"Music should fit the mood of the words." "That there is rhythm in poetry, not only in music." "I learned to accent certain words in singing as well as in speaking."	"Increase in vocabulary" Types of songs and their make-up."
COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS	"We wrote about something that really happened." "You have to work to get things to come out right." "We liked our song because other people liked it. We will always remember it." "We love music and hope that we can 'make music' every year."	"I thought the programs we gave for other classes and our parents were fun." "It discovers hidden talent for those who have it." "I think we need more composers such as Haydn, Bach, Brahms and Dr. Pyle." "I think it is fun to write a song and I think you should too."	"I would like more chances to compose." "I enjoyed this class."

STUDENT EVALUATION

"THE VALUES OF COMPOSING MUSIC"

by Kay Beth Gfeller

Essay by a Sixth Grade Student Composer

A year ago, when told by my music teacher to compose a song, I felt this feat would be easy. That night I found that making up the tune was easy but writing it down accurately was another thing. I ran into a few snags but most of that was taken care of with more experience in composing.

From this experience, I had a desire to compose more and more. I felt more pleased with each composition and decided to try something with a little more challenge. Since our family has a lot of fun playing music together, I decided to compose a song for us. When I started work on it, I discovered I had to inquire about the range of a flute--of course I already knew the range of oboe and piano as I play them. I found that this project kept me busy, happy and content.

In the meantime we had continued going to concerts, listening to our records, taking piano lessons, band and the usual routine many people maintain. I discovered a new respect for music--I had always loved it but now I could <u>feel</u> it. I had been able to pick out the various instruments in the orchestra before but now I found myself listening for the reason they played their special parts. These records and concerts have given me new ideas in sound effects for single instruments or ensemble compositions. Since composing some of these I find that my sight reading has improved greatly as I'm more aware of the position of notes and harmony.

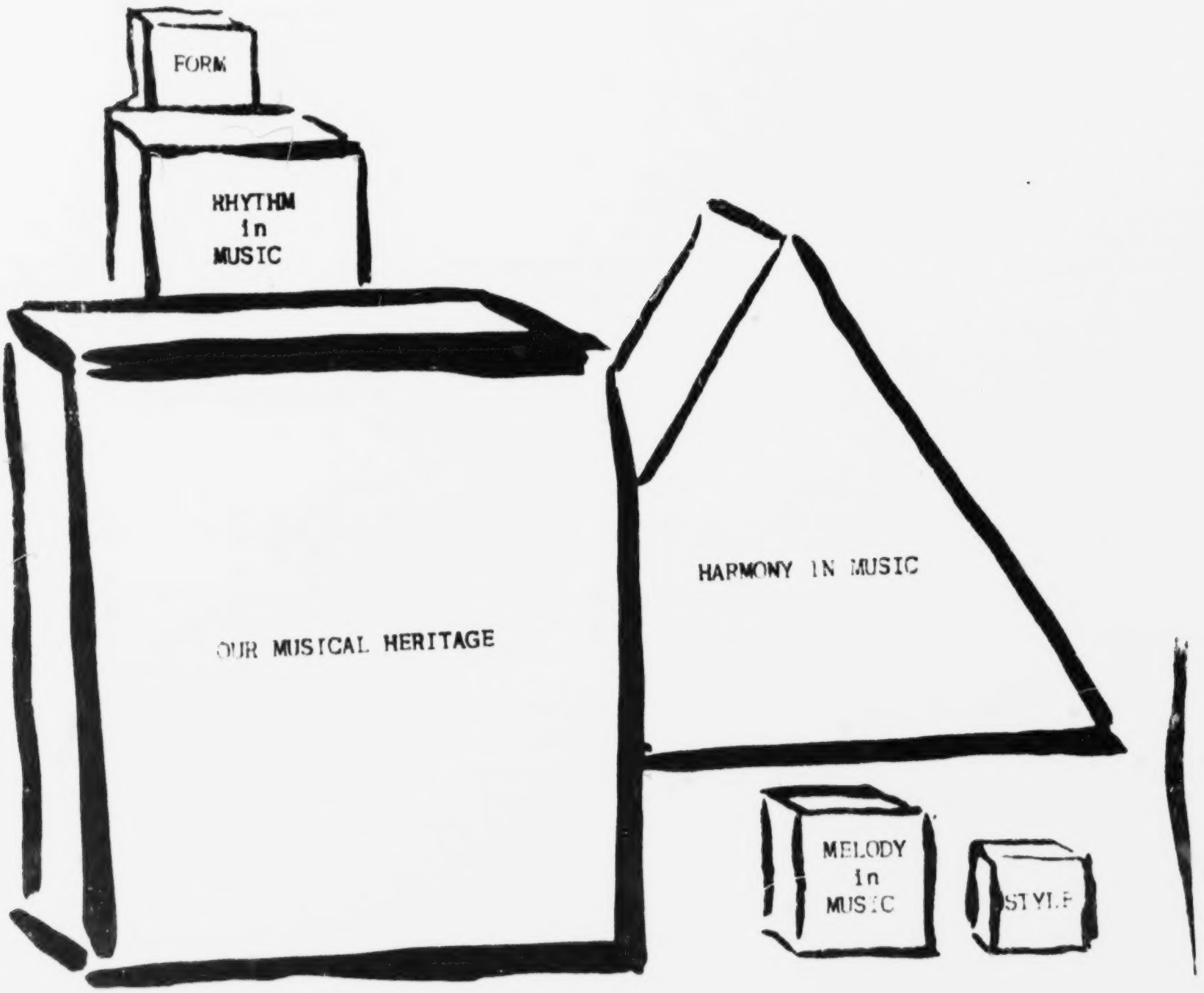
My composition, an ensemble for flute, oboe and piano, was submitted in the Polk County project this year. The project had grown so much since last year that a clinic was impossible. Forty-six compositions were selected to be played at the Clover Hills Elementary School. What a thrill to be one of the lucky forty-six!

I have started to work on a band number. This definitely has pointed out my need for music theory and I find the more I learn the more I need to learn about music.

In composing I have found that life is much like music--it has its ups and downs. Low notes mixed in with the high notes a fuller and more complete "song of life."

Sheldahl Elementary School
North Polk Community School
Sixth Grade--Janice Elaine Dykes,
Classroom Teacher

FUTURE PLANNING



FOR THE TEACHER

STRESS EDUCATIONAL VALUES

Musical — Challenge your students to study the "Music Building Blocks" which introduce this section of the bulletin.

Experiment with the "Music Building Blocks" to help create new ideas.

Intellectual — Help the student to discover the reason for learning techniques of notation.

Place less stress on teaching the techniques of notation.

Cultural — Guide the students to develop intellectual curiosity through active participation.

Help the student to understand the creative process by evaluating his own learning.

Social — Help the individual student to discover that music is something he can possess for himself.

Encourage the student to respect and appreciate the contributions of others.

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FOR THE PARENT

The Polk County Original Composition Project is not a contest. The primary objective is to stimulate and develop musical learning and understandings through a means other than performance.

A Clinic is being planned to culminate the project at the end of the school year. At this time students and teachers will be given the opportunity to evaluate the progress made.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT FOR NEXT YEAR: CULMINATION CLINIC

Each elementary school may present a 15 minute program of creative activities. This should be representiave of the type of creative work being developed in the regularly scheduled curriculum.

Music instructors in each school will decide those activities which they feel best represent the type of work being done in the school and community. Careful planning should be done by each teacher in order to show clearly the educational values for the students. A mimeographed program (some visual material) should be prepared by each school with program notes to show the background of the work, motivation, teaching techniques, development and evaluation of work done by students. Related subject areas may be used. These areas might be art, dance, drama, language arts, social studies and science. Make use of tape recorder, projectors, slides or films to show what is being done in your school.

OUTGROWTHS OF THE PROJECT

The cooperative attitude of teachers, university and general school curriculum personnel has been most gratifying.

One of the music instructors, Mrs. Ellen Jackson, is writing her master's thesis on the use of creative activities in the primary grades. Some of the material in this bulletin has been developed as a result of this intensified interest. Likewise other materials from the bulletin will be made available for use in this field report and other studies being made in various parts of the state.

Two workshops sponsored by the County Board of Education, have also given encouragement and assistance to teachers in developing this concept of teaching music. Edna Doll Ulrich, well-known authority on creative bodily movement and Mr. Marion Egbert, consultant on key-board instruments, contributed much to an understanding of the project.

Other workshops held on the Drake University Summer Campus have been most helpful. Sally Monsour, University of Colorado, Mr. Louis Wersen, Director of Music Education in the Philadelphia schools and Mrs. Mary Jarman Nelson, well-known author and consultant gave encouragement and much concrete assistance to the teachers participating in the workshops.

Finally, and most important, we believe many teachers have "latched on" to this concept of teaching and as a result have freed themselves from the stereotyped methods of teaching music.

It is the responsibility of every teacher to provide valuable and practical experiences for the students. The project as a county-wide event is growing too large to be of value to every student and school; therefore, it has become necessary to delegate much of the planning and responsibility to the individual schools and teachers to keep this creative education meaningful for their school students and the parents.

Janice S. Smith, Director
Department of Music Education
Polk County Schools

July 15, 1961

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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How can we provide experiences which will have lasting values?

2. How can we evaluate the musical growth of students over a period of years?

3. What is your objective: _____

   the composition itself _____ or the musical learnings derived from the creative processes?